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SECRETNATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

December 12, 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR AMBASSADOR LANGHORNE A. MOTLEY
Assistant Secretary, Inter-American Affairs
Department of State

SUBJECT: NSC Comment on the State December 8 Draft
of the Interagency Paper on Central America(S)

Last Friday, December 9, I provided the comments below to Craig Johnstone during a telephone conversation. Today, Admiral Poindexter instructed me to send this comment to you as the NSC view. (U)

The latest State draft reflects a good deal of hard work and moves us forward to the outline of an effective and comprehensive Central America strategy. However, I believe four issues need to be addressed in a more complete way:

1. US diplomatic objectives, strategy, tactics, and timing--we need to develop an overall plan which permits us to take the initiative in a credible and effective way.
2. Legislative communications and persuasion strategy--the new steps will require support in Congress. We should outline now a plan for briefing key leaders just before the President announces his decisions and then briefing a broader segment of the congressional leadership right afterwards but before Congress reconvenes on January 23.
3. Public diplomacy for US domestic and international audiences--the new social democratic governments in Venezuela and Argentina add to the urgency of defining the steps and resources needed to accomplish the following: (a) convince most European and Latin American social democratic leaders to stop endorsing the communist guerrillas, to terminate economic aid to Nicaragua until they implement democratic elections; (b) convincing Mexico of the same and using the February 1984 head of state meeting to accomplish this change; (c) solidifying international Christian democrat and free trade union support for moderates in Central America and obtaining their condemnation of the Nicaraguan dictatorship; (d) etc.

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NSC review completed.

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- Effective public diplomacy will probably take an additional \$3-5 million in resources made available immediately to the State public diplomacy effort so that we can finally produce and distribute the existing information material, make videotapes, etc.
4. Covering the gap in our military maneuvers--our current maneuvers in Honduras will end in early March 1984 just when the Cuban/guerrilla offensive against El Salvador is likely to peak as a way of undermining the election schedule of March 25. Therefore, we need to plan now for practical arrangements to have other forces available which can be used to make Nicaragua prudent, to increase the prospects for a democratic political solution in Nicaragua, and which will give confidence to our friends in the region.(S)

Constantine C. Menges /gH

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